

REUTERS, New Delhi

Even before the World Cup begins in South Africa, India's cricket-crazy advertising world is behaving like it

Judging by the television commercials and advertising campaigns, India's "Men in Blue" are certain to win the World Cup at the Wanderers in Johannesburg in March next year.

However much advertisers may love their cliches, the proverbial slip between cup and lip is simply not being considered. The other teams, world champions Australia included, will apparently play the tournament just for their health.

As India prepare for the first Test next week on their tour of New Zealand, it is perhaps time for a reality check.

With a batting line-up vulnerable to South Africa's fast, bouncy tracks and a bowling attack that lacks bite, it will take more for India to win cricket's biggest prize than the enormous expectations of a billion

"We have been in good form but that's no guarantee that we're going to come back with the World Cup. Indian captain Saurav Ganguly said.

"We have to work really hard and play as well as we have for most of the year to be even near the form that is needed to win a tournament like that. I hope we can pull it off but it's going to be a long, hard road to the title." he added.

For a team that until last month had not lost a single one-day tournament this year, the seven-match home series against the West Indies came as a rude shock.

India were beaten 4-3 at home last month by a side who have long been struggling to relive the glory of their virtually unbeatable days of the 1970s and 80s.

Supporters argued that Sachin Tendulkar was missed and Ganguly was out for the last two matches but it was not batting that was the prob-

India's bowlers were ruthlessly exposed by openers Chris Gayle and Wavell Hinds in the first 15 overs and by a stunning display of stroke-play from young middleorder batsmen Ramanaresh Sarwan and Marlon Samuels.

"The paucity of ideas of the bowlers during the West Indies series was worrying," former Indian captain Sunil Gavaskar wrote.

"The fact that India we never able to utilise the 10 overs of their most experienced bowler, Javagal Srinath, tells a story of its own."

The one thing in India's favour, however, is that the alarm bells may have rung at the right time.

"For the Indians, it was a wakeup call," Gavaskar said. "Almost every team in the world is struggling to find match-winning bowlers. India are in the same boat but are reluctant to try other performers.

"Perhaps the tour to New Zealand will show whether they are right. If the answer is not positive, then what attack have we got to try and win the World Cup?"

But captain Ganguly has faith in his young team.

"The group of youngsters that we have is special." he said. "These guys are different from so many other players we've had in the past. tively. All our wins over the last few months have come because of

Mohammad Kaif, 22, struck a brilliant unbeaten 87 to help India chase a mammoth 326 for victory in a triangular tournament in England earlier this year.

Virender Sehwag, 24, has captured the imagination of Indian fans with his explosive batting at the top of the order

Yuvraj Singh, 20, has helped India to win on eight of the nine occasions when he has scored a half century.

Zaheer Khan, 24, who was rested for the West Indies series due to a troublesome knee, has developed into a quality one-day bowler and comes up with miserly wicket-taking overs.

But he badly misses a reliable supporting cast.

"I don't think the bowlers have done as badly as many people seem to think," Ganguly said. "We've not the best bowling side in the world but we have shown that we can defend targets even though it wasn't evident in the recent Windies series.'

Sides batting second won six of the seven matches, successfully chasing totals ranging up to 325.

'You can't chase 300-plus totals every day," Ganguly said. "But the wickets in South Africa will not be like India -- 260-270 will be a winning total there and if the bowlers get their act together, our strong batting line-up could finish the job."

But, as Ganguly hastens to add: "With teams like Australia, South Africa and Pakistan, it's going to take something special.

1980s with Gordon Greenidge,

Desmond Havnes and Viv

Richards, not even they scored as

quickly as these Australians and

you could arrange a game between

the 1980s West Indians and the

"If somehow, in a time capsule,

people said they were cavaliers.



GOT TO GO: Wavell Hinds looks back to his unsettled stumps after he was clean bowled by Taposh Baisva

BD-WI SCOREBOARD FROM PAGE 13 Ashraful c Hinds b Drakes Sanwar c Jacobs b Drakes Tushar Ibw b Drakes Kapali not out 10 Mashud b Gayle Naimur c & b Gayle Rafique Ibw b Gayle Taposh Ibw b Cuffy Manjurul not out Extras: (b-1, lb-2, w-7, nb-3) Total: (For 9 wickets in 50 overs) Fall of wkts: 1-29, 2-32, 3-42, 4-42, 5-109, 6-151,7-171, 8-171, 9-172. Drakes 43 Cuffy Powel Nagamootoo Result: West Indies won by 86 runs. Man-of-the-match: Vasbert Drakes. Man-of-the-series: Vasbert Drakes. West Indies won the 3-ODI series 2-0 Umpires: AFM Akhtaruddin (BD) and DR Shepherd (Eng).

Small not surprised Australia but is vet to play a Test as "The West Indies' teams of the

Cricket

AFP, London

Gladstone Small, a member of the last England side to win the Ashes, says that the current team's failure to take them off Australia was "no disgrace"

Former Warwickshire paceman Small topped England's Test bowling average with 12 wickets at just 15 runs apiece when Mike Gatting's side triumphed in Australia back in the 1986-87 season.

But Small said the fact that Nasser Hussain's men had already gone down 3-0 in the best of five series, following Sunday's innings defeat at Perth, was no surprise.

"Any team would have struggled against this side. When I played, if you made 200 in a day for the loss of three wickets, you thought you'd done well. These guys (Australia) go for 400 in a day and don't care if they are all out," Small told AFP here on Monday

Small said the loss of batsman Graham Thorpe, who refused to tour because of personal problems. and Andrew Flintoff, who is in

Ashes kinsfolk

All-rounder Craig White is making

the most of his small victory over

Australia as England lick their Ashes

over his two dismissals of brother-

in-law and Australian batsman

Lehmann out for 42 in Australia's

first innings in the third Perth Test

and dismissed him before his sister

Andrea at the second Adelaide Test

had received some good-natured ribbing from White since last

Jason pitches

Australian paceman Jason

Gillespie on Tuesday told English

batting tail-enders they had to learn

to deal with fast, short-pitched

from England's Alex Tudor in the

third cricket Test in Perth on

Sunday, then was booed after

bouncing tailender Steve Harmison

wound above his left eye after he

ducked into a Lee bouncer which

went through the grille of his helmet.

cricketers were paid well and

paid to play cricket, that means

you've got to practise your skills and

get yourself right," Gillespie said at

when I'm batting, I'm no great batter

myself but I've got to learn how to

"I don't mind getting bounced

Gillespie, widely regarded as

Adelaide Airport on Tuesday.

play it, it's as simple as that."

should know how to bat.

Tudor required six stitches in a

But Gillespie said international

"We're professionals and we get

Teammate Brett Lee drew blood

one short!

AFP, Adelaide

deliveries

two balls later.

Lehmann said on Tuesday he

Darren Lehmann in the series.

the previous weekend.

White has the bragging rights

The Yorkshire medium-pacer got

series wounds.

he continues to struggle with a groin injury, had cost England dear

"Thorpe, batting at four or five. could have held the innings together. He's an especially good player of quick bowling," said Small. "And Flintoff's bowling would have been useful on those hard

wickets, it would have put a bit more pressure on ! Small was uncertain whether this present Australia side were the best



GLADSTONE SMALL of his time but the 41-year-old was in no doubt that they were right up

present day Australia team, that's a match I'd pay a lot of money to go and see. Small, who now works for the TV Umpire: Showkatur Rahman (BD). Match Referee: RS Madugalle (SL).

Professional Cricketers' Association (PCA), said holding on to and developing young talent was the key to England's future success. "In this job, I do a lot of work in the

community. I see a lot of young kids playing cricket but a structure needs to be put in place so that when they are 13, 14 or 15 they are not lost to

But Small, speaking at the launch of the PCA's 'cricnet' magazine, was optimistic about England's future. "Sooner or later we will beat them (Australia)," he said.

And he added: "It was great to be part of a winning side even if Australia weren't as good then as they are now.

can save Eng AFP, London

England's prospects of regaining the Ashes remain grim while so few children have the opportunity to play cricket at school, a survey released here Monday said

heels of England's three-day capitulation in the third Test against Australia at Perth.

able 3-0 lead in the best of five Test series and was England's eighth successive Ashes campaign If that was not depressing

enough for English fans, the report found that just three percent of 1,300 children cited cricket as the sport they play most at school.

by sports drink Powerade, said that 23 percent are playing cricket outside school hours and a further 13 percent are having external coaching with 12 percent members of cricket clubs.

increasing pressure to deliver good exam results, it appears that the amount of hours alloted for sport, especially a time-consuming game like cricket, is decreasing.

Tufnell voiced his concern at the

FROM PAGE 13

left-arm spin bowler Sulieman Benn, and wicketkeeper Keith

has recovered from the illness that struck him down during the ICC

the break. Roberts-Lang shot past FROM PAGE 13 Viktoriva Kotlvarenko in Ukraine's Mujahid said an official letter had goal who launched herself into a

> "But we have received no answer. We have now forwarded a copy and sent our comments to the ICC for their knowledge," he added. Mujahid said it would be premature to write off the tour and Pakistan

Since the September 11 attacks on the United States last year. Pakistan has been hit hard by cancelled or relocated tours and the PCB says it has lost millions of dollars in revenues. Pakistan was forced to play the

West Indies and Australia at Sharjah and Colombo this year, while New Zealand also aborted a tour to Pakistan last April in Karachi.

sit out SA Tests

Veteran Pakistan fast bowler Wasim Akram has opted out of the two-Test series against South Africa starting

"Wasim has told the (team) manager about his unavailability and he in turn has informed the board about this situation. But no final decision has been taken on this issue." Pakistan Cricket Board spokesman Samiul Hasan told

"He has not informed the Board directly as such. We have no plans at the moment to recall him after the one-day series in South Africa," he added.

South Africa and Pakistan will play five one-day internationals starting on December 8 followed by Tests in Durban and Cape Town.

The 36-year-old Akram was named in both the one-day and Test squads for the tour of South Africa after he skipped the October Test series against Australia saving he wanted to concentrate on limitedovers matches and the World Cup.

"Wasim was picked for the Test squad only after he told the board he wanted to play the Tests. We don't know what has prompted this change of heart," the spokesman

Waugh wants

FROM PAGE 13 he had not given up hope of forcing

his way back when the final 15-man squad is named later this month. Waugh, who has been working

hard on his fitness in what many consider to be the twilight of his grand cricket career, has been sharpening his bowling as well in order to prove himself in the limited-"I still believe there is a chance

can make it to the World Cup as players can come from outside that 30-man squad to make the final 15. "(Chief selector) Trevor Hohns

spoke to me over the weekend to explain the decision and for now it's up to me to get over that disappointment and focus on what I can achieve in the immediate future." Waugh will be out to prove a

Wales against England in a one-day game in Sydney on Friday. As captain of NSW he will be able to inject himself into the bowling

point when he leads New South

Kim says Steve's words?

Cricket

AFP, Perth

Triumphant Australian Test cricket captain Steve Waugh was unlikely to quit the glamour job voluntarily and would probably have to be pushed, former captain Kim Hughes said Tuesday "You would think the decision is

going to be made for him." Hughes said, the day after Waugh, 37, was overlooked when selectors announced a preliminary squad of 30 players for next year's World Cup one-day contest in South Africa and Zimbabwe. His omission from limited-overs consideration has prompted specu-

lation his Test career could come to an end after the current campaign against England. But Waugh has made it clear that while he is out of favour for the oneday side, he has no intention of

quitting the Test captaincy in the

near future. After his side had whipped England here Sunday to wrap up the Ashes series 3-nil -- and retain cricket's most highly-prized trophy --Waugh said his ultimate goal was to lead an Australian team to a Test series victory in India

Australia do not start their next Indian Test tour until September,

"It is pretty ambitious to think about that, but if there is one thing that would entice me to keep playing, it is to win in the sub-continent," Waugh said.

Hughes said the qualities that



KIM HUGHES

made Waugh such a dogged competitor would ensure he did not give up the Test captaincy without a fight. Hughes suggested an ideal time for Waugh to retire gracefully would be after the fifth Ashes Test, in

Sydney, in January. But Hughes considered it unlikely he would retire then unless considered for Australia's Test series against the West Indies in the Caribbean in May.

"He could hold his form for a while longer." Hughes said.

"And when you are on big money and are part of a successful team, it might take something from outside to call a stop."

Former Australian Test fast bowler Geoff Lawson agreed with Hughes that the signs were that Waugh wanted to play well past this

"But he may not be afforded that privilege," Lawson said. "India won't

"Australian stars David Boon, Ian Healy and Mark Waugh (Steve's twin brother) were all given a message, because it is difficult to make the decision yourself, and I would be surprised if Steve Waugh is any different.'

Australia's selectors are understood to wish to phase out the team's old guard gradually to allow younger players to be blooded over a period to avoid the loss of heavyweights in a group, robbing the world champion side of a wealth of experience in a single move.

Mark Waugh, one of Australia's greatest batsmen and fielders, was dropped just before the start of the

bly have welcomed a break before

returning to the rigors of interna-

them the chance to retain their

advantage before the tri-nations

one-day internationals start in

Sydney a week later (December 13)

the lucrative annual contest, offer-

ing 190,000 dollars (100,000 US)

to qualify for the best-of-three finals

of last summer's contest -- won by

South Africa from New Zealand --

are anxious to start on the right foot

strike winning form early, with their

World Cup one-day crown on the

They are especially keen to

Sri Lanka are also taking part in

Australia, still sore about failing

with an Australia-England clash.

prize money over six weeks.

But selectors decided to give

tional combat.

No respite for England

Australian squad for the Cricket

World Cup limited-overs tourna-

ment in South Africa and Zimbabwe

the international one-day team last

Waugh, 37, was dropped from

McGrath and Lee have a huge

psychological hold over England

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Shell-shocked England face another big test this week when they confront the powerful New South Wales state side in a one-day clash at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Five days after being crushed by Australia in the Ashes-deciding third Test in Perth, Nasser Hussain's team will once again be opposed by two of their chief destroyers, fast bowlers Glenn McGrath and Brett Lee, in the Friday confrontation.

In what has the hallmarks of a deliberate ploy to prevent the tourists from regaining their breath before the start of the international one-day series here next week, the New South Wales selectors have thrown all their big guns into the

Triumphant Test captain Steve Waugh was named to captain the team and twin brother Mark Waugh was also included in the line-up. along with left-hander Michael Bevan, considered one of the world's best in the abreviated form

left out of the 30-man preliminary

Steve Waugh was a day earlier

brain damage

England tail-ender Alex Tudor being felled near the end of the game after Tudor was carried off on a

As well as capturing match-

winning wickets, he terrorised the

an ugly gash above his left eye, but X-rays suggested there was no

stretcher and needed six stitches to

Sri Lanka, former winners of the World Cup, play their first game in the tri-nations competition December 17 when they meet

line in February and March.

England in Brisbane. **SQUAD**

ment

Steve Waugh (captain), Corey Richards, Mark Waugh, Michael Bevan, Michael Clarke, Simon Katich, Brad Haddin, Brett Lee, Stuart MacGill, Nathan Bracken, Glenn McGrath, Dominic Thornely (12th man).

Pakistan seek compensation

Cricket

REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistan has filed a compensation plea with the International Cricket Council (ICC) disputes committee against New Zealand for refusing to play a triangular series in September, a cricket official has

"Since New Zealand pulled out of our triangular one-day contest this year after conveying their participation, they should compensate for the loss of revenues," Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Director Chishty Muiahid told Reuters.

He said that the compensation claim had been submitted at the last executive board meeting of the ICC

34 "

recipe

Doodle

Dandy'

36 Carriages DOWN

35 Ed Asner

37 Sneak's

40 Worry

41 Educate

45 Advertising

award

47 Fingers a

49 Gilligan's

home

direction

--- Claire.

Solution time: 24 mins.

50 Sunrise

52 Dis

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CROSSWORD

ACROSS

singer

attack

8 Portend

12 Baserunner's goal 13 Oom

follower

potentate 15 "Clueless"

expletive

14 Eastern

16 Cross-

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18 Add

20 Prison.

22 Make a

--- (win

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26 Make

29 Broom

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30 1933 dar

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31 Kitten's

32 "God-

17 Cordelia

ammo

Ports-

5 Command

in Colombo in October and had Kenya agreed to play in the tournabeen sent to the disputes commit-

New Zealand refused to play in Pakistan's Golden Jubilee triangular contest also involving Australia in September, saying they had never given final confirmation of their participation.

But Mujahid said that New Zealand had agreed to play in the one-day contest.

"They agreed to play the triangular in lieu of their decision to play just two Tests and not the regular three Tests during their rescheduled tour of Pakistan in April." Mujahid said.

the Golden Jubilee tournament to Nairobi after Australia expressed safety concerns about playing in

By Eugene Sheffer

11 Stip up

21 Cleo's

23 Love

25 Feline's

rounded

26 Sur-

32 More

33 Puniab

35 Caustic

36 XXX

38 Runs

religion

solution

times XI

42 European

spread

44 Lascivious

Faces of

48 Rotation

43 Bread

45 Corp.

46 "The 7

somewhat 24 Squared

19 Jungfrau

quisher

33 Leftovers 53 Reactions 10 48 Down,

technics

place?

55 Disposi-

1 Burn

2 Firetruck

3 Track star

Zatopek

maybe

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Janis

8 Down

stairs

Adjust the

After New Zealand's withdrawal,

"Our point is as the tournament was shifted to a neutral venue there was no reason for the New Zealanders to have any security concerns about playing," Mujahid explained.

He said Pakistan was waiting for a reply from the ICC on the matter, but declined to say how much compensation Pakistan was seek-

Pakistan say they have lost millions of dollars in revenues due to cancelled or relocated series since the September 11 attack on the

They have been forced to play home series against West Indies and Australia this year in neutral

SNKLC, SGH SHESKDKHQ

GLOH EWIENHSH JOKQHIEH Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WOULD A HUGE PANIC AMONG ALL THE WOODLAND ANIMALS

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

China eliminate Germany

Germany was denied a place in the semifinals from Pool B of the women's field hockey World Cup

Nadine Ernsting-Krienke put Germany back on track 11 minutes into the second half, deflecting in Germany's fourth penalty corner.

keeper Birgit Beyer as both sprawled on the pitch, two metres out from goal. Heike Latzsch troubled China with her speed and penetration through the midfield with the ball in possession to pass into the circle

Germany ran out of fitness in

last half-minute of play. China's manager Zhou Xiaoyu,

Australia's unluckiest bowler, said he was unconcerned about having several catches put down off his bowling during Australia's wins in the past two Test matches, in Adelaide and Perth.

Hockey

AFP, Perth Tuesday when they lost 3-1 to

The first goal went to China in the 26th minute when a Tang Chunling backstick strike from the left, top of circle, thundered past the left post and Franziska Gude's vain attempt to stop the shot.

Denise Klecker's strike of Fu Baorong scored the goahead goal for China three minutes later, carrying possession into the circle from the left to ferret a goal around Germany's goal-

and create scoring chances for Ernsting-Krienke and Natascha

the last five minutes, with its defence ragged as Zhou Wanfeng carried through the midfield to pass to Fu Baorong to the left of the circle to lav off to the front of goal for Cheng Hui to score in the

stand-in manager and interpreter for China, said, "All the players are trying their best to get into the semi-finals and we hope we can do that by winning against New

"The players were tired after winning the Champions Trophy and the Asian Games and now

China has qualified for the 2004 Athens Olympics and has helped raise the popularity of hockey in

'We lost the match in the first half and we did not apply enough pressure," said Germany's coach, Peter Lemmen. "We were reacting and did not try hard enough in the first half and I do not know why." "Our first aim was to get to the

semi-finals but we have achieved our second aim to be in the top six in the pool," Lemmen said. Germany is assured of fourth place in Pool A regardless of the

result against Ukraine tomorrow.

defeated Ukraine 3-0 to take fifth

place in Pool B and be relegated to

Earlier Tuesday New Zealand

play off for ninth to 12th position, its worst performance in more than 10 years. The teams had never played before the game and New Zealand were clearly superior in all depart-

Niniwa Roberts-Lang scored the first hat-trick of goals in the tournament from New Zealand's three penalty corners -- an enviable 100 percent conversion rate. In the first three minutes before

the ball. Roberts-Lang repeated the performance 15 minutes into the second half, cracking in from the right of the circle after the ball was held at the battery and passed to the right by the stopper, as New Zealand read Ukraine's brittle penalty corner defence which focuses on running down the ball

dive to her left but failed to cover

Roberts-Lang made two attempts to drive from the battery on New Zealand's third penalty corner five minutes from time. The first shot was blocked at the battery and the second she drove into the middle of the net.

School cricket Akram prefers to REUTERS, Karachi

The report comes hot on the

That gave Australia an unbeat-

However, the report, sponsored

With English schools under

Former England spinner Phil

McLean's last

As expected, Brian Lara has been named in the squad. The left-handed batting maestro

Trophy in Sri Lanka in September. BCCI does not

also been sent to the Indian board asking for a response on the FTP

would not give up hope.

"I've just got to get runs and, if bowl, take wickets and make ar impression," Waugh said.

February and his absence from the shadow World Cup squad was widely seen as signalling the likely end of his Test career once England's Ashes tour is over next

after playing key roles in the opposition's massive defeat in the Test Lee, one of the world's fastest bowlers, was in ferocious form in the Perth Test on his return to interna-

tional ranks.

early next year.

England batsmen with a barrage of short deliveries which culminated in being struck on the head.

He is expected to be out of the game for several weeks. Lee and McGrath would proba-

Pakistan eventually had to shift United States last year. venues abroad.

28 Diminutive

G/HECLKIHO SW

CREATE A PETRIFIED FOREST? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals T